

# Dr. Christ, health care workers among first Arizonans to get COVID-19 vaccine

On Wednesday evening, some Arizona health care workers, including ADHS Director Dr. Cara Christ, will be among the first to receive the vaccine.



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PHOENIX — Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey held a press conference at the COVID-19 vaccine distribution site at the Arizona State Fairgrounds on Wednesday where he announced who would first receive the COVID-19 vaccine in Arizona.

Ducey urged Arizonans to step up and get the vaccine when it is available to them as it is the "best shot at a return to normalcy."

On Wednesday evening, some Arizona health care workers, including ADHS Director Dr. Cara Christ, were among the first to receive the vaccine.

On Tuesday, a [94-year-old World War II veteran](#) was believed to be the first to receive the vaccine in the entire state.

Below is the list of those who will be among the first to receive the vaccine on Wednesday.

The list and corresponding information was released by Ducey's office.



**Dr. Cara Christ**, Medical Doctor and ADHS Director

- Oversees and implements the state's COVID-19 response including testing, vaccine distribution and administration, enforcement, and public health activities
- Conducts COVID-19 testing clinics for critical infrastructure state employees
- Provides onsite technical assistance for health care institutions, including COVID-19 needs
- Provides medical direction and direct patient care at state testing and vaccine sites

**Regina Villa**, Registered Nurse

- Has worked at Valleywise for 17 years
- Nurse manager of one of the COVID units and frequently provides bedside care to COVID-19 patients
- Earned Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Grand Canyon University and is currently working on her Master's Degree
- Graduated from Maryvale High School

**Olubunmi Onadeko, Certified Nursing Assistant**

- Works as a Caregiver for Sparrow Staffing Services
- Block-4 nursing student
- Member of the Black Nurses Association

**Eddy de la Torre, Registered Nurse**

- Completed a concurrent enrollment program receiving an Associate Degree in Nursing from Phoenix College and Baccalaureate in the Science of Nursing from Northern Arizona University
- Works at Banner University Medical Center

**Allison McCabe, Registered Nurse at Skilled Nursing Facility**

- Works on the COVID-19/COVID-19 quarantine unit at Wellsprings Therapy Center
- Earned Associate of Applied Science in Nursing from Mohave Community College in 2019
- Pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Arizona State University

**Will Smith, Arizona National Guard Medic**

- Has served in the Arizona National Guard for five years and was deployed to Iraq from April 2019 to January 2020
- Part of the Guard's TF MED and testing team and has served on testing missions across Arizona, including on Native American Reservations
- He is estimated to have conducted more than 1,000 COVID-19 tests
- Works as a Patient Care Technician at Scottsdale Osborn Medical Center
- Working on his Paramedics license

### **Captain Jeff Stieber, Mesa Fire Department**

- 27-year veteran of the Mesa Fire Medical Department
- Spent 20 years as a National Registry Certified Emergency Paramedic
- Has been a Mesa Fire Immunization team member for the past 15 years
- Has been involved with vaccinating thousands of children at Mesa Public Schools as well as free monthly immunization clinics
- Involved with the City of Mesa COVID-19 testing program, where City of Mesa employees are tested for the virus

### **Captain Kenny Overton, Phoenix Fire**

- 15-year veteran of the Phoenix Fire Department
- Earned Bachelor's Degree in Communication from Arizona State University in 2003 prior to beginning his career with the Phoenix Fire Department
- Has been a paramedic since 2008 and is also one of the department's trained vaccinators

### **Dr. Ross Goldberg, Valleywise Health Surgeon**

- Board-Certified General Surgeon who covers both elective and emergent General Surgery issues at Valleywise
- President of Arizona Medical Association
- District Medical Group Vice-Chair of Surgery at Valleywise

### **Dr. Edmond Baker, Community Physician**

- Medical Director for Equality Health
- U.S. Army Veteran
- Heavily involved in the African American community in Phoenix and has experience working with underserved populations

First doses of the vaccine arrived in the state on Monday.

HonorHealth officials received 10,000 of Maricopa County's doses to begin vaccinations Thursday morning. HonorHealth will be vaccinating health care workers at one of the five PODs. The other is Banner Health.

HonorHealth has the capacity to vaccinate up to 1,000 people per day and hopes to fully vaccinate 10,000 people.

Phase 1A includes health care personnel, emergency medical systems, long-term care, assisted living, and skilled nursing facility staff and residents.